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TO: Natural Resources Commission
Department of Natural Resources Management Team

FROM: Trevor VanDyke, Legislative Liaison and Policy Advisor

SUBJECT: Department of Natural Resources Legislative Update

CLOSE OF THE 2011-2012 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

PA 409-414 Severance Package (HB's 6007-6012) – Rep. Matt Huuki

The new public act will create a Nonferrous Metallic Minerals Extraction Severance Tax Act. There will be a 2.75 percent severance tax levied on the value of certain minerals extracted from the earth in the state. Generally speaking, a taxpayer subject to the mineral severance tax will be exempt from taxes under the General Property Tax Act, State Income Tax Act, General Sales Tax Act, and the Use Tax Act. Revenue from the tax will be distributed at 65 percent to local units of government and 35 percent to a newly created Rural Development Fund for programs to promote the sustainability of land-based industries and support infrastructure in rural communities.

PA 488 Recreational Municipal Forests (SB 1031) – Sen. Tom Casperson

The public act will amend Part 527 (Municipal Forests) of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to include a recreational purpose among the authorized uses of municipal forestland.

PA 487 Indemnity for Livestock (SB 996) – Sen. Tom Casperson

The public act will provide for indemnification of livestock that are killed by wolves, coyotes and cougars. It makes the DARD the lead agency for all indemnification payments.

PA 574-578 Michigan Civilian Conservation Corps (MCCC) (SBs 1261-1265) – Senators Goeff Hansen, Tom Casperson, Phil Pavlov, Rebekah Warren, & Mike Green respectively

The public acts create a new chapter of the MCCC Act to allow the Department to expand the MCCC program outside of state government. The acts create a steering committee and direct the committee to create partnerships with an entity or incorporate a non-profit to carry out the functions of the new MCCC. The acts also update the purposes of the MCCC to include conservation and recreational work and require the program to include field-based experiences and training. Modernizes the work training program offerings of the MCCC to include: wildlife enhancement, trail restoration, surveying, and restoration of sites; it updates age and compensation requirements for participants.

PA 421 Flexibility in Establishing Dip Net Season (HB 5883) – Rep. Joel Johnson

The public act will eliminate conditions under which hand nets, dip nets, set over nets, trammel nets, and hoop nets could be used to take fish. In lieu of these specific conditions, the DNR will have the authority to issue an order regulating the taking of fish with any type of net. The season is statutorily limited to begin no later than April 1. Last year the type of fish that this season is for, moved up the river in March due to a warm spring and the season was missed.

PA 520 Include Wolf on the Game Species List (SB 1350) – Sen. Tom Casperson

The public act will amend Section 40103 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to include wolf as a game species in order to use hunting as a management tool to minimize negative wolf encounters. This act will give the Natural Resources Commission the authority to issue orders under Section 40113a establishing annual wolf hunting seasons.

PA 619 Modify Natural Resources Trust Fund (SB 1238) – Sen. Darwin Booher

The bill would amend Section 1902 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to require the DNR to report on the status of each approved project as well as provide further criteria for the board to follow.

PA 622 Natural Resource Surplus Land (SB 1280) - Sen. Tom Casperson

The bill would amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to increase the Land Exchange Facilitation Fund balance cap from \$2.5 million to \$25 million. The bill also states that the DNR is to work with an applicant who seeks to purchase surplus land all the way to the final decision before DNR can work with another applicant for the purchase of the same land.

HB 5415 - Establish Father Marquette National Memorial and Mackinac Straits Area Museum Advisory Board – Rep. Frank Foster

The bill sought to establish an 11-member Father Marquette national memorial and Mackinac straits area museum advisory board within the DNR. The board would have provided a focal point for various community groups concerned with replacing and expanding the museum. The state would have had to fund the creation of a new museum and we are unaware of any intent to do so at this point.

- The bill was vetoed by the Governor.

THE 2011-2012 SESSION HAS CLOSED. ALL BILLS NOT PASSED HAVE EXPIRED.

If you would like to learn more about these and other bills, you can access the Michigan Legislature website at www.legislature.mi.gov.